

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 209977

15

ORIGIN NEA-12

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S/PRS-MR KING(INFO)

NEA-MR ATHERTON

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P 242118Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 209977

INFORM CONSULS

KUWAIT POUCH MUSCAT, DOHA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING OCTOBER 24, 1973:

QUOTE: AMB. MCCLOSKEY: I SHOULD SAY THAT THE SECRETARY,
WHO HAD HOPED AND PLANNED TO HAVE A MEETING WITH THE PRESS
TODAY, HAS NOW PUT IT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW.

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PAGE 02 STATE 209977

Q. HAS THERE BEEN ANY PROGRESS TOWARDS GETTING FIRMED
UP WHAT YOU CALL THE FORMULA OR THE FORUM FOR THE
NEGOTIATIONS?

A. THERE IS NOTHING THAT I COULD REPORT TO YOU IN THAT
REGARD THAT HAS DEVELOPED. AS YOU CAN SEE, THE ENTIRE
EFFORT YESTERDAY WAS TO FORMULATE A NEW RESOLUTION, A

RESOLUTION THAT WAS IN EFFECT A REINFORCING RESOLUTION DIRECTED AT THE ISSUE OF CEASE-FIRE. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE CEASE-FIRE IS BEGINNING TO TAKE EFFECT.

NOW, LET ME SAY ON BACKGROUND THAT WE CAN'T WITH ABSOLUTE AND FINITE CONFIDENCE SAY THAT THE LAST SHOT HAS BEEN FIRED IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE OBVIOUSLY ARE HOPEFUL THAT, AS IT IS APPEARING TO TAKE HOLD, IT WILL TAKE HOLD PERMANENTLY.

Q. BOB, ARE THESE NEGOTIATIONS, AS A CEASE-FIRE, HOPEFULLY, TAKES HOLD, GOING TO ENCOMPASS AN END TO THE UNITED STATES AIRLIFT TO ISRAEL?

A. ALL I CAN SAY ABOUT THAT SUBJECT NOW IS THAT THE RESUPPLY EFFORT TO ISRAEL BY THE UNITED STATES IS CONTINUING. THE SOVIET AIRLIFT HAS BEEN UP AND DOWN OVER THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS. IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE, BASED ON OUR INFORMATION, TO IMPUTE A POLITICAL DECISION TO THAT AT THIS TIME. THEY ARE DOWN FROM THE LEVEL OF, SAY LAST WEEK, AUGMENTING WITH SOME SHIP DELIVERIES. WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH THE SOVIET UNION A REDUCTION OF THIS EMERGENCY RESUPPLY EFFORT.

Q. BOB, IF THE CEASE-FIRE DOES TAKE HOLD PERMANENTLY, WOULD THE FIRST PRIORITY BE ON AN EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS? AND THEN WHAT WOULD YOU SEE COMING AFTER THAT? WHAT KIND OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD THEN TAKE PLACE?

A. WE DO CONSIDER THAT AS AN EARLY PRIORITY, AFTER A CEASE-FIRE, THERE SHOULD BE AN EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS, AND THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION HAVE PLEDGED EFFORTS TO ASSURE, TO THE EXTENT WE CAN, THAT THIS IS ACHIEVED.

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PAGE 03 STATE 209977

ON THE SECOND PART OF YOUR QUESTION, I WON'T ARGUE WITH IT. THERE WILL BE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF DIPLOMATIC INTERCHANGE WHICH WILL BE AIMED AT, AGAIN, IF THE CEASE-FIRE HOLDS, FINDING THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS TO HAVE A NEGOTIATION BEGIN. WHETHER THAT IS TO DEVELOP IN DELIBERATE PHASES, WE JUST CANNOT SAY YET.

Q. IS IT FAIR TO ASSUME THAT FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW IT WOULD BE MORE DESIRABLE FOR THERE TO BE DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS RATHER THAN INDIRECT NEGOTIATIONS?

A. I DON'T WANT TO ANSWER THAT HEAD-ON, AT THIS POINT. THE COURSE AND THE PATTERN THAT NEGOTIATIONS MAY TAKE, IF THEY CAN BE AGREED UPON, OBVIOUSLY WILL DEPEND ON THE POSITIONS STAKED OUT BY THE RESPECTIVE PARTIES.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US WHAT FORUM THE UNITED STATES WOULD

LIKE TO HAVE, AND WHETHER YOU ARE SUGGESTING THIS TO THE PARTIES, OR WOULD YOU LEAVE THE DECISION ON THAT TO THE PARTIES?

A. WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS ON A FORUM, BUT NOT IN A WAY THAT WOULD PENALIZE THE PARTIES IF THEIR INTEREST DEVELOPS IN A NEGOTIATION AGAINST HAVING THEIR OWN CHOICES OR PREFERENCES EXPRESSED.

Q. HAVE WE AND THE RUSSIANS HAD ANY KIND OF DISCUSSIONS ON HOW THE DIFFICULT ASPECTS OF 242 WOULD BE WORKED OUT?

A. NOT IN ANY WAY THAT WOULD IMPLY AN AGREEMENT OR AN UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO OF US.

Q. ARE WE NOT IN ALMOST THE SAME DIFFICULT POSITION WE WERE IN AT THE END OF THE FIGHTING IN 1967? WHAT IS TO PREVENT US FROM GOING ON IN THE SAME SORT OF A MILITARY STALEMATE WITH NOBODY GETTING TOGETHER ON RESOLVING -- WORKING TOWARDS A PERMANENT PEACE SETTLEMENT?

A. WELL, THE FACT THAT IF THE CEASE-FIRE HOLDS TODAY, THAT THE NEXT STEP TOMORROW IS TO MOVE INTO A PRESCRIBED FORUM WITH A PRESCRIBED FORMULA, IS TO ABUSE THE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 209977

DIPLOMATIC PROCESS. ON BACKGROUND, I MIGHT ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE MAY BE SOME WHAT I WOULD CALL CONSTRUCTIVE AMBIGUITY IN THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION THAT WILL PERMIT AN ACCOMMODATION OF VIEWS TO BE ENTERTAINED AMONG THE PARTIES TO A NEGOTIATION. SO THAT THIS PROCESS WILL ONLY BECOME CLEAR AS TIME MOVES ALONG AND CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS ARE EXCHANGED.

Q. YOU SAID WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH THE SOVIETS REDUCTION OF THIS EFFORT, MEANING THE AIRLIFT. ARE YOU MAKING IT KNOWN THROUGH THIS STATEMENT OR DO THEY KNOW IT ALREADY? AND ALSO ARE WE PREPARED TO DISCUSS A TOTAL EMBARGO, A TOTAL END TO THE AIRLIFT ON BOTH SIDES?

A. I WANT TO BE CLEAR THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THAT I AM TALKING ABOUT THE EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES, THE EMERGENCY MEASURES, THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS A REDUCTION THERE. I AM NOT INCLUDING THE SO-CALLED ON-GOING ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS WE HAVE AND PRESUMABLY THE OTHER SIDE HAS. AND REDUCING -- I CAN'T SAY MORE THAN THAT. I CAN'T SAY FINITELY DOWN TO ZERO.

Q. WELL, THE FIRST QUESTION IS, ARE YOU MAKING THE OFFER THROUGH THIS MEDIUM, OR DO THEY ALREADY KNOW THAT WE HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT BUT HAVE NOT BEEN PREPARED TO RESPOND?

A. WELL, THIS MAY BE THE FIRST CLEAR PUBLIC STATEMENT IN THIS REGARD. I SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS REFERRED TO IN THE CONVERSATIONS IN MOSCOW. MY ASSUMPTION IS THAT WHAT HAS BEEN SAID HERE TODAY WOULD NOT COME AS ANY GREAT SURPRISE TO THE USSR.

Q. HAVE ANY OF THE MECHANICS BEEN WORKED OUT YET MERELY FOR ENFORCING OR SUPERVISING THE CEASE-FIRE THROUGH UNTSO OR OTHER TROOP MOVEMENTS; AND IF SO, TO WHAT EXTENT?

A. WELL, I WOULD HAVE TO SAY ONLY TO A CERTAIN EXTENT YES. THERE WAS A CONSENSUS, I GATHER, IN NEW YORK THAT IN ADOPTING THE RESOLUTION, PARAGRAPH 2 REQUESTS THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO "TAKE MEASURES FOR THE IMMEDIATE
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PAGE 05 STATE 209977

DISPATCH OF UN OBSERVERS IN ORDER TO SUPERVISE THE OBSERVANCE OF THE CEASE-FIRE BETWEEN ISRAELI TROOPS AND THE TROOPS OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT, USING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE UNTSO AVAILABLE INCLUDING THOSE IN CAIRO."

LET ME GO BACK TO THE OTHER PART OF YOUR QUESTION. AND I HAVE TO RELY HERE ON A COUPLE OF PUBLIC REPORTS, I THINK, IN WHICH IT WOULD APPEAR THAT AT LEAST SO FAR AS EGYPT AND ISRAEL ARE CONCERNED, THERE HAS BEEN NO OBJECTION RAISED ABOUT A FIRST-INSTANCE USE OF A NUMBER OF THE UNTSO PEOPLE WHO ARE IN THE NEARBY AREA. WHETHER, AS THIS SITUATION DEVELOPS OVER THE NEXT DAYS, THAT NUMBER WOULD BE AUGMENTED, I WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE OPEN AS A POSSIBILITY. AGAIN, ACCORDING TO OUR BEST INFORMATION, THERE IS SOMETHING ON THE ORDER OF 215 TOTAL UNTSO PEOPLE IN THE GENERAL AREA. SO IF THE PARTIES COULD AGREE, I SUPPOSE THERE IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE PRESENT NUMBER IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA COULD BE AUGMENTED. SO IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, UNTSO WOULD DO THE OBSERVING.

Q. CAN YOU FORESEE A SECOND STEP IN WHICH FORCES FROM THE U.S. OR THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT TAKE PART IN THIS OPERATION?

A. I DON'T SEE THAT UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCE.

Q. IN THE RESOLUTION THERE IS THE REFERENCE TO APPROPRIATE AUSPICES. IN ANSWER TO WHAT THOSE AUSPICES MIGHT BE, YOU SAID FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS YOU WOULD RATHER THE SECRETARY ANSWER THAT. BUT IN QUESTIONS ALONG A SIMILAR LINE, ON WHAT KIND OF FORUM OR FORMULA THERE SHOULD BE FOR NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH IN MY MIND REFERS BACK TO THE AUSPICES, YOU SAID THAT STILL HAS TO BE WORKED OUT AND IT IS BEING WORKED OUT. NOW, IS THAT THE SAME ANSWER?

A. NO -- I THINK THERE IS A DISTINCTION OF DIFFERENCE HERE. I KEPT USING THE WORD "FORUM" FOR

NEGOTIATIONS. AND HERE WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT IS WHERE
THE PARTIES THEMSELVES MIGHT COME TOGETHER -- WHERE
THAT WOULD BE, WHICH OF THE PARTIES, WHAT LEVEL, TIMETABLES
IF THEY WOULD CHOOSE TO SET THEM, THAT HAS NOT DEVELOPED
AT ALL YET. I LEAVE THAT SOMEWHAT DISTINCT FROM THE
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PAGE 06 STATE 209977

QUESTION OF APPROPRIATE AUSPICES -- BECAUSE DON'T READ
"APPROPRIATE AUSPICES" TO MEAN LITERALLY THE FORUM IN
WHICH NEGOTIATIONS AMONG AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES MIGHT
TAKE PLACE.

Q. A CLARIFYING POINT. DID YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT YOU DO
NOT SEE AMERICAN AND SOVIET TROOPS MOVING INTO ANY KIND OF
PEACE-KEEPING OPERATION NOW, AT THIS LEVEL, OR ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT LONG-RANGE AS WELL?

A. I AM ANSWERING NOW, UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCE,
BUT IN A WAY THAT I HOPE TO AVOID ANY SPECULATION ALONG
THAT OTHER LINE. KISSINGER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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